

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07

IO-11 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01

SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 DODE-00

NSC-05 /090 W

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R 141134Z FEB 76

FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1419

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBFR VIENNA 0042

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MBFR PFOR HU

SUBJ: MBFR: HUNGARIAN PARTY ORGAN AND MBFR DATA

REF: BUDAPEST 0485

1. FOLLOWING IS SEQUENCE OF EVENTS WHICH RESULTED IN ARTICLE MENTIONED IN REFTEL. EXISTENCE OF NEPSZABADSAG'S FIRST VAJDA ARTICLE WAS BROUGHT TO ATTENTION OF US DEL PRESS OFFICER IN VIENNA ON FEB 11 BY REUTERS. PRESS OFFICER TRIED TO CONFIRM THROUGH AVAILABLE LOCAL SOURCES CONTENTS OF NEPSZABADSAG ITEM AS RELAYED BY REUTERS CALL.

2. SUBSEQUENTLY, AP CALLED US DEL PRESS OFFICER ON SAME STORY. AP REPORTER ASKED PRESS OFFICER A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ABOUT THE VERACITY OF THE NEPSZABADSAG FIGURES. (SEE BELOW
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FOR PRESS OFFICER REPLIES.) SUBSEQUENTLY, AN AP STORY

WAS TRANSMITTED ON FEBRUARY 11. THE STORY CALLED HUNGARIAN PAPER'S ITEM AN "APPARENT COMMUNIST LEAK" WHICH "DREW CRITICISM, BUT WAS NOT FLATLY DENIED BY A SPOKESMAN FOR NATO." AFTER MENTIONING THAT NATO PRESS OFFICER HAD REFUSED TO DISCUSS FIGURES OF OFFER, BUT HAD CONFIRMED THAT OFFER OF U.S. NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS DID INCLUDE DELIVERY SYSTEMS, AP CARRIED THE FOLLOWING TEXT, WHICH IS VERY CLOSE TO ACTUAL PHONE DISCUSSION.

3. THE AP ITEM SAID THAT THE "NATO OFFICIAL" REFUSED TO SPECULATE ON THE SOURCE OF THE NEPSZABADSAG STORY, AND THAT HE HAD MENTIONED THAT SOME WESTERN PAPERS HAD ALSO PUBLISHED ALLEGED DETAILS OF THE OFFER. AP FURTHER REPORTED THAT THE "OFFICIAL" SAID THAT PARTICIPANTS IN THE VIENNA TALKS "HAVE AN UNWRITTEN AGREEMENT ON THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE TALKS. THEY SHOULD NOT BE CONDUCTED PUBLICLY, SINCE THE DETAILS MADE PUBLIC WOULD HAMPER NEGOTIATIONS." THIS IS A FORMULATION WESTERN SPOKESMEN HAVE FREQUENTLY USED WITH THE PRESS IN VIENNA. THE QUOTE IS ALMOST VERBATIM; PRESS OFFICER DID NOT MAKE CHARGE THAT LEAK CONSTITUTES A "GRAVE VIOLATION," AS CLAIMED BY VAJDA IN THE REFERENCED FEB 12 ITEM.

4. ON FEB 12, AT THE USUAL POST-PLenary PRESS BRIEFING, THE PRESS OFFICER WAS DIRECTLY QUESTIONED ABOUT LEAK. AS A RESULT, HE HAD TO RESPOND ON A CONTINGENCY BASIS TO CERTAIN DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL WHICH REPORTERS MIGHT NOT HAVE ASKED SO POINTEDLY AT THIS STAGE IF HUNGARIAN STORY HAD NOT APPEARED. SPECIFICALLY, PRESS OFFICER WAS ASKED WHETHER THE FIGURES AND OTHER FACTS PRINTED IN THE HUNGARIAN PARTY ORGAN WERE CORRECT. PRESS OFFICER REFUSED TO DISCUSS FIGURES, BUT CONFIRMED, IN ACCORDANCE WITH AGREEMENT REACHED IN AD HOC GROUP FOLLOWING NAC RELEASE OF OPTION 3 PUBLIC PRESENTATION PAPER CM(75)76, THAT WESTERN NUCLEAR OFFER DID INCLUDE CERTAIN DELIVERY SYSTEMS. WHEN ASKED SPECIFICALLY WHETHER THESE INCLUDED PHANTOMS AND PERSHING HE REPLIED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. WHEN ASKED HOW HE VIEWED THE PUBLICATION OF THIS INFORMATION BY THE HUNGARIAN NEWSPAPER, PRESS OFFICER MADE POINT THAT ANY PUBLICATION OF NEGOTIATING DETAILS GOES AGAINST CONFIDENTIALITY RULE AND MAKES SERIOUS NEGOTIATING MORE DIFFICULT. RESOR

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